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Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council extends UNOMIG mandate until 12 January 1996, subject to review should mandate of CIS force in Georgia be changed.

+ Secretary-General meets in Paris with senior United Nations officials to discuss situation in former Yugoslavia; to undertake fundamental review of UNPROFOR's role in light of developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Secretary-General discusses United Nations operations with President of France; has meetings with three African leaders.

+ UNPROFOR reports reduced military activity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, except in Sarajevo; UNHCR says food situation in Bihac is disastrous.

+ Security Council reviews sanctions regime against Iraq; members say sanctions will not be lifted until Baghdad complies fully with all resolutions.

+ Disarmament Commission to hold 1995 session from 15 to 30 May; to conclude consideration of nuclear disarmament in framework of international peace and security.

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The Security Council today decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) until 12 January 1996. The extension is subject to review in the event of any changes that might be made in the mandate of the Commonwealth of Independent States peace-keeping force there. The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 993 (1995).

The Council called on the parties to reach substantive progress in the negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations. It urged them to refrain from any unilateral actions which could complicate or hinder the political process aimed at an early and comprehensive political settlement.

For information media—not an official record

The Council reiterated its call to the Abkhaz side to accelerate the process of the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons. It called on the parties to improve their cooperation with UNOMIG and the CIS peace-keeping force in order to provide a secure environment for those returning.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today in Paris with senior United Nations officials to discuss the deterioration of the situation in Croatia and developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The meeting was attended by Special Representative Yasushi Akashi; the Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg; the Force Commander of the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF), General Bernard Janvier; and the Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), Major-General Rupert Smith.

In the light of the expiration of the Bosnian agreement on a cessation of hostilities, the subsequent escalation of fighting and increasing attacks on peace-keepers, it was decided that a fundamental review of UNPROFOR's role was required. To that end, the Secretary-General asked his Special Representative and the United Nations Commanders to study alternatives to respond to the new situation.

The Secretary-General will return to New York over the weekend, and will present an oral report to the Security Council early next week. The report requested by Council resolutions 982 (1995) and 987 (1995) will be submitted shortly thereafter.

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The Secretary-General met yesterday in Paris with French President Francois Mitterand. They discussed United Nations actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Angola and elsewhere. The President expressed encouragement for the Secretary-General in his efforts on behalf of world peace.

Following today's meeting on the former Yugoslavia, the Secretary-General met with the Heads of State of Congo, Cameroon and Gabon. They were in Paris for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe.

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There has been an overall reduction in military activity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, except in Sarajevo, according to a United Nations spokesman. Over 2,300 firing incidents were reported in the Bosnian capital over the last 24 hours. Meanwhile, there were more attacks against United Nations personnel. The Bosnian Serbs refused to allow a helicopter to evacuate the French peace-keeper critically wounded by a sniper yesterday. He was evacuated several hours later by a fixed-wing aircraft.

(more)

The spokesman called attention to the "disastrous" food situation in Bihac, which has not been reached by UNHCR convoys for five weeks. The agency has sufficient supplies to meet only one-tenth of the food needs of the 155,000 people there. However, the Bosnian Serbs have given positive signals that they will allow two UNHCR convoys into Bihac next week.

The situation remained tense in all Sectors in Croatia, with sporadic firing incidents along cease-fire lines but no major escalation of military activity. However, the United Nations was having difficulty resupplying peace-keepers and patrols were being cut back because of fuel shortages.

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The Security Council met today to review the sanctions regime against Iraq, and made no changes to it. The Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Sir David Hannay, told correspondents that Iraq had made no progress towards complying with relevant Council resolutions since the last sanctions review in March. He added that not a single voice had been raised in favour of the lifting of sanctions.

The Permanent Representative of the United States, Madeleine Albright, said Iraq's failure to meet its obligations left the Council with no choice but to keep the sanctions in place. Rather than comply with those resolutions, Iraq had chosen to defy the Council through a combination of "half-measures and outright deception". It had not fully disclosed its biological and chemical weapons programmes, had yet to return Kuwaiti property, and had continued its internal embargo against northern Iraq and its repression of the Shia.

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The Disarmament Commission will hold its 1995 session at Headquarters from 15 to 30 May. The Commission will conclude its consideration of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, as well as its review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade.

The Commission decided last month to reduce the duration of the session from three weeks to 11 days. It took that action because of such concurrent disarmament activities as the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty underway in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

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